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# Document spells out alleged Soviet role in Ethiopia

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An Ethiopian government document, marked "top secret" and smuggled to Britain, provides evidence that Ethiopia's Marxist revolution is being guided by Moscow.

The document consists of two reports submitted by the Soviet Communist Party. One offers a draft for the Ethiopian Constitution which, with no significant changes, is under consideration by the regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam.

The other report describes how the revolution should be pursued. It asserts that the "Soviet contribution, moral and

material assistance to the revolution will, henceforth, be determined by the revolutionary steps that may be taken against these right-wing reactionary elements who are the paid agents of the CIA."

The document is in Amharic and carries the stamp of the Ethiopian Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs. It, along with an English translation that also bears an official stamp, was smuggled out by a sympathizer of the opposition to the Mengistu regime. The sympathizer gave the document to a reliable contact in London, who passed it on to this reporter. Western diplomats in Ethiopia now have other copies of the document. In the second report, the reactionary elements are referred to as "Trotskyites" (leaders of the Eritrean, Tigrean,



Statue of Lenin in Ethiopia

and other opposition movements) or "the churches."

The Soviets, according to the report, urge all-out war against both the Christian and Islamic religions in the country as "the first task to make sure that the masses give up their old outlooks and get divorced from the reactionary influence of religion and [that the masses] completely forget all their ancient customs and traditions."

"The church has had over 1,500 years of domination. The revolution is barely 10 years old. If the church remains unopposed, it would use all of its resources to stifle the revolution which represents the true aspirations of the masses: workers, peasants, and soldiers."

The report says the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's "narrow, conservative outlook" can be depended upon to "stand as a barrier to any attempts to educate the masses. The church must be recognized as being in com-

petition with the revolution for the mind and loyalty of the Ethiopian masses, and in this struggle the revolution must be prepared to act forcefully and resolutely."

The report then warns that Islam is even more anti-revolutionary than the Christian church:

"The Islamic allies of imperialism are using these [petro-] dollars to support their Ethiopian lackeys who will stop nowhere in their attempts to undermine the revolution. . . . That is why it is indispensable that the Commission for Organizing the Working People of Ethiopia continue and broaden the campaign to break the stranglehold of the church and the mosque on the masses and work toward the eradication of their influence. . . .

"The youth should be kept away from old customs and should be nurtured in communist thinking and discipline." The peasants "should be made to give up the idea of individual ownership and holding [of land] and espouse the communist ideas of collective farming."

The report advises that "measures should also be taken to hit hard and to decisively weed out agents of international imperialism and dilutents [sic] who, having infiltrated the bureaucracy and government as well as mass organizations, are engaged in spreading rumors and creating confusion." The Soviets advise that "the indoctrination and the nurturing of the armed forces in Marxist-Leninism is the most important point that should be given immediate and due attention. . . .

"The new revolutionary armed forces should be different from the old. They should neither be chauvinistic nor unduly patriotic. They should be loyal to the revolution, the principles of proletarian internationalism as well as to the socialist community. The armed forces should be organized and indoctrinated in such a way as would enable them to fulfill their internationalist duty."

The document says that "like all other preceding revolutions, the Ethiopian revolution has erupted in accordance with the principles of Marxist-Leninist theory [and is] an integral part of the international socialist revolutionary movement. The establishment of a Leninist party and the success of socialism in Ethiopia . . . will be a source of moral inspiration . . . for the revolutionary class struggle being waged everywhere in Africa."

The Soviet Communist Party "is thus determined more than ever in its commitment to assist in the fulfillment of its mission."

The report also displays concern over what it describes as attempts by reactionaries "to promote anti-Sovietism in Ethiopia."

"By down-playing the moral and material assistance the Soviet Union and other socialist countries render to socialist Ethiopia, they are trying to attach economic and social problems and difficulties, some of which have come about due to natural causes, to the Soviet Union and to discredit communism and thereby encourage the rise of national chauvinism."

There is a striking resemblance between the language used by Mengistu in his speeches and that of the Soviet guidelines. However, there has as yet been no positive evidence that Mengistu has accepted Moscow's call for a campaign against religion, nor that he is committed to a policy of enforcing collectivization on peasants.